

Message Text

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ORIGIN SAS-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 INR-10
IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-08 NRC-05 OES-09
SOE-02 DODE-00 DOE-15 SS-15 SP-02 CEQ-01 PM-05
ICA-11 /141 R

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APPROVED BY S/AS:P FARLEY
EA/ANZ - MR. BENNETT
EA/PIA - MR. BODDE
OES/NET - MR. BORIGHT
OSTP - MR. GREENWOOD (INFO)
-----065859 100056Z /73

R 090138Z SEP 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
INFO AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
CINCPAC HONOLULU HAWAII 1268

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 229060

VIENNA FOR IAEA, CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENUC PARM ENRG E;IN AS EX

SUBJECT: NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE IN THE PACIFIC

REF: CANBERRA 7170

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1. AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY REPS (STARR AND KNIGHT) CALLED AT
DEPT YESTERDAY ON URGENT BASIS TO REQUEST OUR COMMENTS
ON DRAFT TALKING POINTS FOR MINISTERS, PREPARED BY DFA,
TO USE IN RESPONDING TO ANY PARLIAMENTARY OR PRESS IN-
QUIRIES ARISING OUT OF PRESS STORIES REPORTED REFTEL.
AUSTRALIANS SHOWED US FOUR PROPOSED TALKING POINTS. WE
EXPRESSED NO OBJECTIONS TO THEIR FIRST, THIRD AND FOURTH

POINTS (DESCRIBED PARA 2 BELOW) BUT SUGGESTED CHANGES IN SECOND TALKER (PARAS 3 AND 4 BELOW). EMBASSY SHOULD BE GUIDED BY OUR REACTION TO THESE TALKERS IN ANY FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH GOA AND IN HANDLING PRESS INQUIRIES.

2. WE RAISED NO OBJECTION TO SUGGESTIONS THAT GOA OFFICIALS SHOULD SAY: THEY UNDERSTAND USG HAS NO PLANS FOR NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL IN PACIFIC REGION (FIRST TALKING POINT); USG FULLY AWARE GOA POSITION ON STORAGE OF FOREIGN NUCLEAR WASTES IN AUSTRALIA AND HAD RECEIVED NO ENCOURAGEMENT TO BELIEVE SOUTH PACIFIC SPENT FUEL REPOSITORY WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO REGIONAL COUNTRIES

(THIRD POINT); GOA EXPECTATION IS THAT USG WOULD NOT ACT WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION REGIONAL COUNTRIES AND WOULD BE RESPONSIVE THEIR VIEWS (FOURTH POINT). (NOTE THAT WE INTERPRET WORD "REGION" IN THIS CONTEXT IN BASICALLY SAME GENERAL SENSE AS AUSTRALIANS, PER PARA 4 REFTTEL, AS EMBRACING ISLANDS IN SOUTHERN AND WESTERN PACIFIC, BUT WE WERE NOT EXPLICIT ON THIS DURING DISCUSSION WITH AUSTRALIANS AND WOULD WANT AVOID ANY PRECISE DEFINITION OF TERM.)

3. SECOND AUSTRALIAN TALKING POINT MADE DISTINCTION BETWEEN SPENT FUEL STORAGE AND TERMINAL WASTE DISPOSAL ("NUCLEAR WASTE DUMP;") AND INDICATED AUSTRALIAN UNDER-CONFIDENTIAL

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STANDING THAT US WAS STUDYING PACIFIC AREA IN FIRST NOT SECOND CONTEXT. WE CONCURRED WOULD BE USEFUL MAKE THIS DISTINCTION BUT ASKED AUSTRALIANS TO RECAST REST OF TALKING POINT BY DESCRIBING GENERAL US APPROACH TO SPENT FUEL STORAGE PROBLEM THUS AVOIDING NARROW FOCUS ON PACIFIC ISLANDS.

4. SPECIFICALLY, WE SUGGESTED AUSTRALIANS SHOULD MENTION US FOREIGN SPENT FUEL STORAGE OFFER AND OUR POLICY OF ENCOURAGING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION THIS FIELD (OCTOBER 18 DOE POLICY STATEMENT); CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN ENCOURAGING NEGOTIATION OF UNDERSTANDINGS ON INTERNATIONAL SPENT FUEL REPOSITORIES (SECTION 104(A) OF NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION ACT); AND INFCE STUDIES OF SPENT FUEL STORAGE AND WASTE MANAGEMENT. WE HOPED AUSTRALIAN STATEMENTS WOULD LINK USG INTERNAL STUDIES TO THIS BROAD POLICY FRAMEWORK AND MAKE CLEAR STUDIES ARE GLOBAL IN SCOPE, COVERING ASIA/PACIFIC REGION AMONG OTHERS, AND ARE STILL UNDERWAY (I.E., NO SPECIFIC POLICY CONCLUSIONS REACHED).

5. RE UPCOMING PACIFIC FORUM MEETING, WE SAID THAT IF

DISCUSSION OF THIS ISSUE BECOMES UNAVOIDABLE IN FORMAL SESSIONS, WE HOPED AUSTRALIAN REPS WOULD LIMIT THEMSELVES TO POINTS COVERED PARAS 2 THROUGH 4 ABOVE. HOWEVER, DURING INFORMAL CORRIDOR CONVERSATIONS AUSTRALIANS COULD INDICATE, IF IT WOULD HELP IN LAYING THIS ISSUE TO REST, THAT THEY BELIEVE IT HIGHLY UNLIKELY USG WOULD REQUEST THE OTHER PACIFIC FORUM COUNTRIES TO ACCEPT REGIONAL SPENT FUEL REPOSITORY ON THEIR TERRITORY.

6. DURING DISCUSSION WITH AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY REPS, WE AVOIDED SAYING THAT USG HAS GIVEN UP HOPE OF FINDING SUITABLE SPENT FUEL STORAGE SITE ANYWHERE IN PACIFIC, AND EMBASSY SHOULD BE GUIDED ACCORDINGLY. MOREOVER YOU SHOULD, WHEN APPROPRIATE, REITERATE TO GOA
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OFFICIALS GENERAL POINTS YOU MADE TO WALKER (PARA 5 REFTEL). CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: STORAGE, RADIOACTIVE WASTES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 sep 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE229060
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: A FLOYD
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780368-0775
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780984/aaaacrff.tel
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Litigation History:
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Message ID: c4737053-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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TAGS: MNUC, PARM, ENRG, IN, AS, XP
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Review Markings:
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